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TREASURER FONG PROMOTES *SAVE-AT-SCHOOL* PROGRAM

(SAN MATEO) -- State Treasurer Matt Fong and San Mateo school officials Tuesday kicked off the treasurer's "Save-at-School" program, which is designed to teach elementary school students money management skills while they save.

Treasurer Fong was joined at Parkside Elementary School in San Mateo by roughly 275 students, parents and faculty of the San Mateo-Foster City School District as well as officials from Mid-Peninsula Bank and San Mateo Deputy Mayor Sue Lempert. Fong's Save-at-School program allows students from participating schools to open savings accounts with banks like Mid-Peninsula Bank and participate in a curriculum designed to teach sound financial skills.

"Above all else, education means preparing students for the challenges they will face in life. Personal savings levels have dropped to their lowest point since the Depression. This is a serious problem, and we have to teach the next generation how to overcome it," Fong said. "The Save-at-School program is a practical, hands-on method of teaching savings."

The program is centered around a 12-lesson teaching manual designed for use as a guide for participating educators. After the course, students will be able to determine an income, make consumer choices, plan a budget and pay bills. The curriculum activities are divided into six categories: math; social studies and history; science; computers; creative arts, including art and drama; and language arts, which includes writing and reading. The program is designed to provide flexibility to teachers by allowing them to select information from the manual as it seems appropriate for their classes.

Fong's goals for the Save-at-School program include promoting proper financial habits and the concept of savings, expanding students' access to savings accounts, developing problem-solving skills and combining the resources of the Treasurer's office, educators, business and the financial community in making new programs available to students. For more information about Save-at-School, visit the program's web page at treasurer.ca.gov/sas.htm.